

Chilled but determined

Churches in China brace for abolition of home meetings

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Chinese government is engaging in a three-phase campaign to eradicate Protestant house churches within ten years, according to China Aid Association (CAA), a watchdog group headed by exiled Chinese Christian pastor Bob Fu.

Quoting an unnamed source, CAA alleged the Chinese government's strategy was clearly outlined in a document released during a training class conducted last September by the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) for a group called Patriots in the Christian Community.

The CAA information was circulated in late April in a report from Compass Direct News, a news service dedicated to reporting on Christians persecuted for their faith. The existence of an elevated government crackdown on house churches also has been verified by Baptist Press.

Phase one of the Chinese government's strategy docu-



STANDING STRONG — Members of Shouwang Church in Beijing met outdoors during China's harsh winter as government authorities evicted the church and forbade landlords from renting to the congregation. The church has refused to register with the government's Three-Self Patriotic Movement that strictly controls religious activities across the country. (BP photo courtesy of China Aid Association)

ment calls for local authorities to conduct a thorough investigation of house churches nationwide from January through June of this year and create dossiers on each of them.

In phase two during the following two to three years, authorities would strongly encourage unregistered churches to affiliate with the government-supervised

Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM).

In phase three, to be completed within 10 years,

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BAPTIST
COLLEGIATE MINISTRY

Baptists leaving Vanderbilt campus over new policy

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — The Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) at Vanderbilt University in Nashville has turned down the school's recognition rather than submit to a controversial non-discriminatory policy that would force the ministry to allow a student to become a member and seek leadership positions regardless of whether he/she is a Christian.

Randy C. Davis, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention (TBC) which administers the BCM program, informed members of the TBC Executive Board of the decision to not accept the recognized status in a letter e-mailed to them on May 7.

Originally, the Vanderbilt BCM planned to seek the recognized status and remain a registered organization on

see BCM on p. 9

Churches tapped for excellence in media

Ministries marked by creativity

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Awards for excellence in Mississippi Baptist electronic media ministries were presented May 4 at the annual Witnessing Through Media Banquet at Colonial Heights Church in Ridgeland. Representatives from winning churches included (from left) Gene Neal, First Church, Quitman: Best Video Program/Church Musicals (Div. 1), for The Journey In Search of the King; Harry Medders, First Church, Brandon: Best Video Program/Worship Service (Div. 1), and Best Web Site (Div. 1); Sarah Hankins, Jeffrey Broome, and Zach Goodwin, First Church, Clinton: Best Video Program/Magazine (Div. 1) for SparkTV Season 2 Finale, Best Video Program/Music Video for The Champion, and Most Creative Use of Media for Spark TV Season 2 Finale; Damon Burgess, First Church, Jackson: Best Video Program/Church Musicals (Div. 2) for Carols By Candlelight 2011; Jerry Mixon, First Church, Ridgeland: Best



MISSISSIPPI WITNESSING THROUGH MEDIA award winners (Photo by William Perkins)

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Entitled to the same rights?

It has been quite a couple of weeks for the advancement of the homosexual political agenda, thanks primarily to the two men at the top of American governance.

First, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden let the cat out of the bag when he told NBC's Meet the Press host David Gregory on May 6 that he was in favor of same sex marriage.

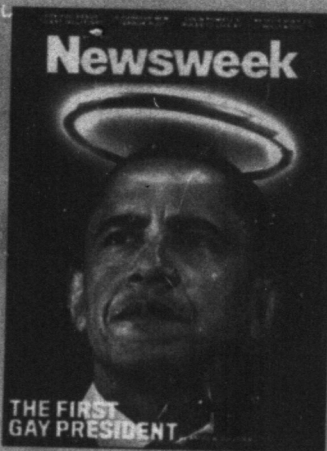
"I am absolutely comfortable with the fact that men marrying men, women marrying women, and heterosexual men and women marrying another are entitled to the same exact rights, all the civil rights, all the civil liberties. And quite frankly, I don't see much of a distinction beyond that... people fear that which is different. Now they're beginning to understand," Biden said, according to the official NBC transcript of the broadcast.

Not to be outdone, Biden's boss, U.S. President Barack Obama, followed a few days later with his own full-throated endorsement of same sex marriage. In an interview at The White House on May 9 with ABC's Robin Roberts, a Pass Christian native, the official ABC transcript records the President as saying, "At a certain point, I've just concluded that for me personally, it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married."

On May 14 at a political fundraiser in New York City with the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) Leadership Council, Obama doubled down by calling for repeal of the federal Defense of Marriage Act which defines marriage exclusively as the union of a man and a woman.

The President even used his May 14 commencement address at Barnard College in New York to push his same sex marriage campaign. According to a May 15 FoxNews report, he shared the dais with the founder of a homosexual rights group called Freedom to Marry and said, "No matter who you love or what God you worship, you can still pursue happiness — I will support you every step of the way."

The national news media promptly entered into a celebratory delirium, with Newsweek magazine's cover featuring a Caesar-like photograph of Obama wearing a halo in the colors of the rainbow. The rainbow, of course, is a well-known symbol of the homosexual political agenda. The halo is an obvious slap at Christians, who overwhelmingly oppose same sex marriage and the homosexual political agenda.



The accompanying headline underneath the President's photo on the Newsweek cover states, "The First Gay President." The cover article was written by Andrew Sullivan, an openly homosexual social commentator who has championed same sex marriage and is legally married to his male lover under the laws of the State of Massachusetts.

So much for unbiased reporting. The homosexual political agenda has been with us for a long time now. Little by little, year by year, decade by decade, they have seen much of their agenda enacted. Supporters of that agenda are presently prepared to push through same sex marriage no matter what it takes, and they have very influential people on their side.

As Glenn Stanton's powerful commentary alongside on this page states, we are in a struggle for no less than the definition of humanity and human social conventions as we have understood them for thousands of years — and it is coming to our doorsteps.

What is it going to take to quell this spiritual, political, and social maelstrom? It's going to take a lot of prayer, a lot of witnessing, and a lot of personal involvement. Pray that our country will repent and return to the values God intends for us to maintain. Witness to those who are lost, and pray for God to convict them as He has convicted us. Get involved in the struggle, not least by voting as God leads us to vote and speaking up in the public square for what is right.

Christians have a lot to do before our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ returns (Matt. 28:18-20). We'd better get started right away.

Deconstructing humanity

Former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, an outspoken homosexual, infamously asked a question earlier this decade that has become one of the central questions surrounding the same sex marriage debate: "How will my same sex marriage harm your marriage?"

It gets asked constantly and is meant to be a discussion-stopper, but the problem is that it sees marriage as purely a private relationship, sealed off from all other parts of community life. It reveals a complete lack of understanding of what marriage actually is — not just in our country, or for people of faith, but across all human cultures.

Marriage is what anthropologists call a "human universal," because it is found in all human cultures throughout time. It exists as a heterosexual institution throughout the world and history — not in the majority, but exclusively.

The real answer to Frank's question is quite simple: "Your same-sex marriage will do nothing to impact my marriage, but your marriage is not what we're debating in our nation. We are debating whether it is wise to radically and permanently redefine marriage in our nation for everyone, and that is quite significant indeed."

Same sex marriage not only redefines marriage wholesale for everyone, but it actually deconstructs humanity. That's a strong and consequential assertion, but that is exactly what it does. It says that you as a husband or father, or you as a wife or mother, have no real meaning or significance in your fundamental humanity — a humanity which always reveals itself as either male or female.

Because same sex marriage declares humanity wholly genderless, it also redefines the family. If male and female are merely sentimental ideas with no practical, essential qualities for family, then family, parenting, and kinship radically change. An important 1996 essay in the homosexual magazine OUT makes this clear, admitting that legalizing same sex marriage is "a chance to wholly transform the definition of family in American culture.... Our gay leaders must acknowledge that gay marriage is just as radical and transformative as the religious right says it is" (emphasis in original).

Same sex marriage is also threatening religious liberty. Activists have tried to comfort religious folks by saying "your pastor will never be forced to perform same-sex weddings," as if that is as far as religious faith



Guest opinion

with Glenn T. Stanton

goes, but there is a growing list of real-life ways that citizens' and organizations' rights are being trampled. Here are only a few:

■ Catholic Charities had to shut down their large-scale adoption work in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. because they refuse to place children in same-sex homes and because they believe orphaned children should get a mother and father.

■ Photographers in New Mexico were charged with violating state anti-discrimination laws because they refused to photograph a lesbian commitment ceremony.

■ The Salvation Army in San Francisco lost a \$3.5 million contract providing important social services to the poor because it refused to provide domestic-partner benefits.

■ Churches in Canada have been threatened because they refuse to allow same-sex wedding parties to use their social halls.

■ A lesbian couple won a discrimination complaint against a Methodist facility in New Jersey because it denied their request to use the group's boardwalk pavilion for their commitment ceremonies.

Chai Feldblum was recently appointed by President Obama as a commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). When asked what she thought about the intersection of religious freedom and gay rights, she bluntly said, "I'm having a hard time coming up with any case in which religious liberty should win."

Same sex marriage is not just about one's personal marriage. It is fundamentally about how we define and understand marriage, family, and humanity itself. For the first time in the history of our nation, religious freedom is being asked to move to the back of the bus — and the reason is to make room for sexual and familial experimentation.

Stanton is the director for family formation studies at Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Co. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length.

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NO SURPRISE

Obama endorses same sex marriage

Americans still show support of traditional marriage at polls

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — U.S. President Barack Obama on May 9 became the first sitting president to publicly support same sex marriage, one day after North Carolina voters overwhelmingly affirmed the traditional definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Obama, a Democrat, seemed to be forced into stating his position after the North Carolina vote and after U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, also a Democrat, told NBC's Meet the Press host David Gregory three days earlier that he is "comfortable" with homosexuals and lesbians marrying.

Obama made his announcement of support during an interview with ABC News' Robin Roberts, a native of Pass Christian.

"I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married," Obama told Roberts.

Even before Obama was elected, some conservative and liberal pundits scoffed at the suggestion that Obama did not support same sex marriage. For instance, in 2008 he opposed California Prop 8, a constitutional amendment that defined marriage as being between a man and a woman.

In 2011 he ordered the U.S. Justice Department to stop defending in court the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal law that defines marriage in the traditional sense, and he also announced support for a congressional bill that would overturn the law.

Earlier this year, his spokespersons announced he opposed constitutional marriage amendment proposals in North Carolina and Minnesota. He's also spoken twice to events held by the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest homosexual rights group.

Yet all along, the White House maintained he merely was "evolving" on the issue.

Bryant Wright, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of Johnson Ferry Church in Marietta, Ga., reacted to the news with sadness.

"It is very depressing news when the president of the United States uses his power of influence to endorse same sex marriage," he told Baptist Press. "...Scripture is very clear that from the beginning, God intended marriage to be between one man and one woman. It is important for us who are followers of Jesus to uphold the sacredness of marriage according to Scripture."

Wright added, "Christians are called to pray for our government leaders, and it is now more important than ever to pray for President Obama in this very misguided decision."



OBAMA endorses same sex marriage.

"No matter what culture may dictate with its ever-changing winds, I am grateful for the sure and unchanging source of authority we have in Scripture. We must hold to God's Word on this and many other issues."

— Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee
interim pastor, First Baptist Church Jackson

It remains to be seen whether Obama's stance will cost him politically. Although some polls now show majority support among Americans for same sex marriage, any such support has yet to translate to the ballot. North Carolina voters passed the constitutional amendment last week by a margin of victory — 61-39% — that surprised even supporters.

In addition, thirty-two states now have voted on the issue and traditional marriage has won every time with an average margin of 67-33%.

After watching the North Carolina results last week, pollster Tom Jensen of the left-leaning Public Policy Polling sent out a Tweet, writing, "Hate to say it but I don't believe polls showing majority support for gay marriage nationally. Any

time there's a vote it doesn't back it up."

Maine and Minnesota will consider the issue in November, and Maryland and Washington state likely will as well.

Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee in Nashville, said he was saddened and deeply disappointed by Obama's announcement.

"No matter what culture may dictate with its ever-changing winds, I am grateful for the sure and unchanging source of authority we have in Scripture," Page said. "We must hold to God's Word on this and many other issues."

Jim Campbell, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, which defends traditional marriage laws, said Obama's announcement

"Folks are saying, 'What in the world is going on in North Carolina? We look like Mississippi.'"

— North Carolina Gov. Beverly Perdue, Democrat
in reference to last week's vote through which North Carolinians elected 61-39% to pass a constitutional amendment in support of traditional marriage



could negatively impact families.

"The president has spoken eloquently about how fatherless homes often hurt children and society," Campbell said. "Today's statement is a tragic contradiction that promotes the creation of even more fatherless and motherless homes."

The Democratic National Convention is scheduled for Sept. 3-6 in Charlotte, N.C., but some Democrats are demanding that the convention be moved after the vote last week favored the traditional definition of marriage.

North Carolina Gov. Beverly Perdue, a Democrat, expressed her outrage over the vote during a May 11 stop in Greenville, N.C. "Folks are saying, 'What in the world is going on in North Carolina? We look like Mississippi,'" she said.

In strong, clear tones the fellow told me. "I don't like those new songs." He was not the first person to tell me that or say something similar to that, but he said it as emphatically as anyone I have ever heard. In fact, he said it in a way that let you know that the new songs were wrong, the old songs were right, and that there must be something sinister and inherently evil about the new songs. He also said it in such a way with a pause and a nod of his head that he was certain that I would agree with him and his assessment of worship past, present, and future.

I wasn't able to go quite that far, but I said to him, "There are some of the new songs that I don't like either." He nodded in full agreement and knew that he had a comrade in arms, but then I said, "There are a good many of the old songs that I don't like either." What could I possibly mean? If a song was in the hymnbook, it should be loved. I have lived through a bunch of hymnbooks and every one of them changed and put some new songs in and took some old songs out.

I grew up holding the old green Broadman Hymnbook. If you go back and check it, you will find some interesting songs in there. I remember when the 1956 Edition of *The Baptist Hymnal* came out. It was a larger, better hymnal with some fresh new approaches. I remember when the 1975 Edition of *The Baptist Hymnal* came out. It was quickly very few people's favorite. A lot of good hymns were taken out, some bad, new hymns were put in, and some old, strange hymns were recycled. Oh well, we survived it. Then the newest edition of *The Baptist Hymnal* came out in 1991. It has served many people well. In spite of many congregations singing off the screen, it has survived.



I Don't Like Those New Songs

Now before you get too perturbed about either singing from a hymnbook or from a video screen, just know that Jesus actually did neither. Probably not one hymn of any description that we sing did Jesus use where He went to worship. Here is the most important thing when it comes to singing. **The Scripture says that it is supposed to be a melody that comes from your heart.** Regardless of whether you are reading it off a screen, from a book, or just from the memory bank of your own mind, it ought to be a heart experience. Music, singing, and praise are experiences of attitude and gratitude. Spiritual singing is not as much about lines, notes, melodies, and musical instruments as it is about the condition of our hearts. Oftentimes when people get upset about the music in church, the biggest problem is not with the music or even the instruments that accompany it, but it is the attitude of the heart.

Attitude makes a difference.

Recently, I was sent a beautiful story about a lady with a great attitude. Apparently, this lady was receiving cancer treatments and one morning she woke up and she had lost all of her hair except three hairs. She looked in the mirror and saw the three strands of hair and with a smile on her face and joy in her heart she said, "I believe today I will braid my hair." So she took the three strands, platted them, and went out and had a great day. The next morning she got up, looked in the mirror, and lo and behold one of the strands of hair was gone. Only two hairs were left. Quickly and joyfully she made a decision and said, "I believe today I will part my hair in the middle." She did and went out and had a great day. The next day when she awoke she got up and looked in the mirror and another hair was gone. Only one hair remained. The lady said, "This is great! I believe today I will wear my hair in a ponytail," and so she

went out and had another marvelous day. The next morning the last hair was gone. She looked in the mirror and exclaimed, "Thank goodness I won't have to fool with this hair today." **Attitude makes a huge difference.**

At times I hear people talking about the music with disdain and criticism. They do not know that sometimes the music they are criticizing is strictly, specifically, and word for word Scripture set to music. Often when that happens I say to myself and have at times said aloud, "The problem you have with the music is not the music."

One final thought that is always baffling to me about the way we struggle with new songs and new ways of approaching praise has to do with all of these new songs. **Every old song we sing was at one time new.** The history of hymnology is an unending story of the flow of new, creative, refreshing, and uplifting ways to tell the old, old story. It is a record of beautiful expressions and often slow acceptance. There have been and there always will be new songs. In fact, Revelation 5 says that when we get to heaven and gather around the throne that all of the people of God will sing a new song.

Now I do not know if they have giant screens in heaven, if the words will all be in a book, or maybe God will just implant them in our brains, but we will sing. What will it be? I don't know! It is going to be a new song, and I just have an idea that it is going to be a song about Jesus that is filled with joy, wonder, thanksgiving, and pure praise. You don't want to miss this new song. What a way to go!

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College News



Shane Thrash, assistant Baptist Student Union (BSU) director at **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY**, Alyssa Bond of Perkinston, Andrew Harper of Ellisville, Landon Adams of Carthage, and Tim Glaze, BSU director, pose for a photo following William Carey University Honors Day 2012. Bond received the BSU Outstanding Service Award, Harper was recognized as 2011-2012 BSU president, and Adams was named Outstanding BSU Lead Team Member.

Jennifer Talbert, assistant professor of communication and director of forensics; poses for a photo with Brenda Waldrip, assistant professor of education and vice president of student services, after being recognized at **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** Honors Day 2012. Talbert was named Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year, and Waldrip Outstanding Administrator of the Year. Also, the Faculty Research Award went to (not pictured) Caleb Smith, an adjunct professor in WCU's Nockmester School of Arts and Letters.



Chelsea McMillen of New Orleans, La., and Tommy King, president of **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY**, pose for a picture following WCU Honors Day 2012. Dr. King presented McMillen with the Jenkins - Chastain Citizenship Award, which is the highest honor given by the university. She was also awarded the Senior Chemistry Award, as well.



ABOVE: Slater Murphy of Ridgeland ('79), Charles Jerome Brown of Hattiesburg ('73), Dorothy Roberts McEwen of Long Beach ('78), Sen. Chris McDaniel of Ellisville ('94), Tommy King, president of William Carey University, and Dorman Laird of Sumrall ('61), pose for a photo after the five alumni were inducted into **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY's** Hall of Fame at the Homecoming 2012 Alumni Banquet on April 20.

In other College News:

► The Baptist Student Union of Jones County Junior College will host a reunion June 2, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the BSU center. Meal, \$5 person/\$20 max per family. Children welcome. Special guest, former BSU director John Sumner. Please RSVP to (601) 477-3973 or Jcbsu@gmail.com.



Brenda Waldrip, assistant professor of education and vice president of student services at William Carey University, poses with Joshua Wilson, a senior social science major from Brookhaven, at WCU Honors Day 2012. Waldrip, who was named Outstanding Administrator of the Year, presented Wilson with the Student Leadership Award for his outstanding contributions to WCU, including his role as editor-in-chief of Carey's student newspaper, *The Cobbler*, and the creation of The Cobbler online. In addition to his work with *The Cobbler*, Wilson is also the president of the Mississippi Beta Chapter of the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society, a member of the Homecoming Committee, and the student assistant to the Office of External Relations. In the past, he worked as a staff writer and community columnist for *The Daily Leader* newspaper in Brookhaven.



Tommy King, president of **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY**, Scott Hummel, vice president for advancement and church relations, and Obra Quave, professor emeritus of theatre, pose for a photo following the Legacy Dinner honoring Quave held in the Joe and Virginia Tatum Theatre on May 4. The dinner celebrated the Legacy of Learning recently presented to Quave for his 42 years as chair of the drama and theatre department. Hummel presented the honoree with a memory box filled with notes of gratitude from friends and former students during the ceremony.



Mary Libby Payne, founding dean of the **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE** School of Law, will have a lecture series named in her honor on the Jackson campus this fall. Payne served as the MC law dean from 1975-78. The former MC law professor was among the original members of the Mississippi Court of Appeals. The Mississippian was awarded the Mississippi Medal of Service by Gov. Haley Barbour in 2011. Established by MC School of Law leaders and supporters, the Mary Libby Payne Endowed Lectureship Series will begin September 27. Thomas D. Morgan, a professor at George Washington University Law School, will deliver the first lecture. He serves as the Oppenheim Professor of Antitrust and Trade Regulation Law at the GW law school in Washington, D.C.

Just for the Record



FIRST CHURCH, FLORA, celebrated its 125th anniversary Apr. 29 with approximately 650 present. Local artist Mark Millet presented a painting of the church during the worship service. Shown are Millet and pastor Joe Cole.

The children's choir of **CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, presented the Easter musical, *The Living Lord*. Shown are the children and music director Danny Creel. Hal Hatten, pastor.



UNITY CHURCH, IUKA, children's Sunday School class enjoyed Easter Sunday's lesson outside by the cross. Shown are the class and teachers Kaye Johnson, Lynette Crum, Bridget Johnson, and pastor Wayne Crum.



The children's choir of **GOODWATER CHURCH, MEEHAN**, presented the musical program, *'Twas the Time Before Easter'* on April 1.



The youth and children of **ELLARD CHURCH, CALHOUN COUNTY ASSOCIATION**, participated in a girls vs. boys penny war, with the girls winning with \$162.11 against the boy's collection of \$38.60. The pennies go toward the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.



MT. OLIVET CHURCH, SCOTT COUNTY, held a deacon ordination service Mar. 4 for Richard Pope. Shown are pastor Bruce Robinson and Pope.

Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name. (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Just for the Record



The Brotherhood disaster relief team of **FIRST CHURCH, POTTS CAMP**, helped replace the roof of an elderly female's residence in the Waterford community of Marshall County.



SPRING CREEK CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, hosted its annual Easter egg hunt at the home of Ruth and Doug Whitehead Mar. 31.

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YELLOW CREEK CHURCH, TISHOMINGO COUNTY, held a deacon ordination. Shown are AMD Bobby Cobb, deacon chairman Noonan Floyd, pastor Stanley Magill, Gary Urser, and Marshall McRight.



SPRING HILL CHURCH, WESSON, ordained Eddie Jordan, Kelly Young, and Neal Miller as deacons Apr. 22.



STRONGHOPE CHURCH, WESSON, ordained Wayne Roberts as deacon July 31, 2011. Shown are Roberts and Rod Martin.

In other Church News:

► **The Oak Forest-New Beginnings and Oak Forest Church, Jackson**, along with family and friends, witnessed an open display of Jesus' last words from the cross. Fred Wilson, a senior at Wingfield High School in south Jackson, spent over an hour and a half on the cross, representing the suffering of Jesus.

► **Corinth Church, Heidelberg's**, Vacation Bible School is June 4 - 8, 8 - 11:15 a.m., ages 3 - 13. For more information, call (601) 787-3828.

► **Holly Church, Alcorn**, will host the Kingsmen Quartet May 27, 6 p.m., followed by a potluck meal and fellowship. A love offering will be received. The church is also hosting The Talley's July 8, 6 p.m. John Boler, pastor.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **West Shady Grove Church, Wayne County**: Homecoming, June 3; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mitchell Smith, speaker and pastor.

► **Adaton Church, Starkville**: Homecoming, June 10; Danny Cheatum, speaker.

► **Calvary, Pricedale**: Homecoming, June 3; fellowship, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Cletus Moak, speaker; Floyd Davis, pastor.

► **Mont Rose Church, Quitman**: Homecoming, May 27; services, 10:30 a.m.; Mickey Dalrymple, speaker; Grant Wall, worship leader; Doug Jones, pastor.

► **Friendship Church, Brookhaven**: Homecoming, May 27; services, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch and local talent; Matt Alexander, speaker.

► **Antioch Church, Monticello**: Homecoming, May 27; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; sing and worship service, 10:30 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Bruce Brady, Jr., speaker; Southern Praise, singing.

► **Shiloh Church, Port Gibson**: Revival, May 20 - 23; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by dinner and afternoon service; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Wiley Reid, speaker; Pat and Roy Doughty, music.

► **Wayside Church, Scobey**: Homecoming, May 20; Lannie Wilbourn, speaker; Fletcher Moorman, music.

► **Calvary Church, Carroll County**: Homecoming, May 27, beginning at 10:30 a.m. and followed by dinner; Jim Nunnelee, speaker; Lamonda Stanford, music; Bud Vance, pastor.

► **Bellevue Church, Thaxton**: Homecoming, May 20, 11 a.m.; Mike Robertson, speaker; Tommy Inmon, pastor.

► **Concord Church, McCall Creek**: Homecoming, May 27; services, 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground and afternoon service, 1:15 p.m.; Bruce Crosby, speaker.

► **Harmony Church, New Albany**: 100th anniversary, June 3; worship and celebration program, 10 a.m., followed by a luncheon and presentation of certificate from the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission; Freddy Johnson, pastor.

Just for the Record



FIRST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, hosted a ladies tea May 5, with author Karen Kimbrel as guest speaker. Dan Howard, pastor.

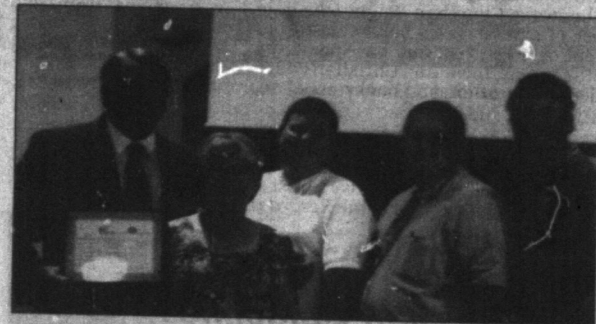


DESOTO CHURCH, CLARKE COUNTY, held a baby dedication for Bentley Michael Harris Apr. 8. Shown are pastor Keith Tankersley, parents Ben and Jennifer Harris, and big brother Eli.



AT RIGHT: RIVERSIDE CHURCH, MONEY, ordained Lynn Welch as pastor. Shown are Welch, Phyllis Welch, Nathan Gorman, David Rogers, and Bryan Burson.

AT LEFT: The children's ministry of SLAYDEN CHURCH, SLAYDEN, sponsored an Easter parade, puppet show, crafts creation, lunch, and an Easter egg hunt. Approximately 35 children attended on their decorated rides. Shown are Jenna, Katie, and Lauren Buse. Rusty Fair, pastor.



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WTM

cont. from p. 1
Video Program/Promotional for LIFEGroups@FBCR.
The awards banquet each year is part of the larger Witnessing through Media Conference sponsored by Mississippi Baptists in Broadcasting, the Communications Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and the Mississippi Cooperative Program. The keynote speaker at the 2012 banquet was Mike Ebert, vice-president of communications for the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Alpharetta, Ga.

Workshops presented at the 2012 Witnessing Through Media Conference included Fundamentals of Camera Operation, Sound Advice Basic and Advanced, Getting Started on the Web, Web Site Design Advanced, Lighting for Worship Basic and Advanced, Getting Started in Media Ministry, Creative Production Techniques, and Projection Systems/Worship Software.

For more information on Mississippi Baptists in Broad-

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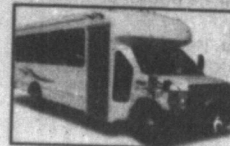
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churches refusing to comply would be shut down, according to the CAA information.

Officials also would ban the phrase, "house church," as well as all reports in house churches from websites and other media and replace the term with "house gatherings" that would refer to groups meeting in sites affiliated with TSPM.

In a random survey conducted by CAA sources in several provinces, more than 95% of house church leaders said they had already felt the impact of these investigations, while 85% said local religious affairs departments already had created a dossier for their group.

Since the beginning of 2012, we have noticed an increase in the frequency of persecution," CAA said in a press statement dated April 20. "In addition to the continuing persecution of Shouwang Church in Beijing, the number of similar cases has risen 20 percent over last year and has spread into other areas, including Christian education, publication, and bookstores."

The campaign first emerged in December 2010 through a secret document titled Operation Deterrence, issued by the Communist Party's Central Committee. This directive urged officials at all levels to "guide" house church Christians to attend only churches belonging to TSPM and to break up large house churches into smaller groups.

Shouwang Church, numbering some 1,000 members, felt the effects of this directive almost immediately. Having blocked Shouwang's attempts to register legally or to find a suitable worship venue, officials in April 2011 began to arrest and interrogate church members who sought to meet outdoors in a public plaza.

Police detained 12 church members who again gathered for outdoor worship on April 22, a little over a year after the first outdoor service in April 2011, according to Shouwang's Facebook page.

Three members were quickly released but the others were sent to local police stations and held for several hours of interrogation. Another church member was detained in a hotel on April 20 and was not released until Sunday morning.

"Since the beginning of 2012, we have noticed an increase in the frequency of persecution.

In addition to the continuing persecution of Shouwang Church in Beijing, the number of similar cases has risen 20 percent over last year and has spread into other areas, including Christian education, publication, and bookstores."

— China Aid Association
press statement

"In the past year... our experience of the Lord differs every week. It is His grace and peace that have protected us and sustained us until now," a church staff member wrote. "May the power and glory of the Lord become our strength while waiting for God in this difficult circumstance."

Operation Deterrence also empowered SARA to certify and create files on all Protestant clergy as a means to further implement China's Regulations on Religious Affairs. That process should

be completed by the end of 2012, according to a statement in January by SARA Deputy Director Jiang Jianyong.

Churches led by clergy who are not certified under this system will then be at greater risk of being shut down.

Simultaneously, the China Christian Council, an umbrella group for Protestant churches that is closely aligned with the Chinese government, and TSPM are rolling out a joint curriculum titled, Training Sessions for Ministerial Certification, across China. These sessions include instruction on China's Regulations on Religious Affairs and the need for patriotism, according to ChinaAid.

According to the document circulated last September, the government plans to use "humane law enforcement measures" to achieve the total eradication of house churches.

"Humane law enforcement, long-term implementation and 'united front' style registration — how will this ... impact house churches that are seeking a path to religious freedom?" ChinaAid asked in its April 20 statement.

Editor's note: Adapted from Compass Direct News (www.compassdirect.org). Used by permission.

CORRECTION: In the May 3, 2012 issue of *The Baptist Record*, the story *100 days at the cross* stated that over 80 people had prayed to receive Christ at the cross. The actual count as of May 7 is 23. *The Record* regrets the error.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in *The Baptist Record* must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to *The Baptist Record*, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

BCM

cont. from p. 1

campus though many other religious organizations said they would not seek to be registered on campus after the new school policy was announced.

In his e-mail to the board, Davis wrote that he was originally supportive of the decision to seek recognized student organization status at Vanderbilt. "However, on April 22, it came to my attention that the application included our representatives

signing the revised non-discrimination policy. It is our understanding now that 'to abide by,' means 'to accept without objection' and 'to accept as our own.'"

Davis noted that signing onto the policy would require the BCM "if the occasion should ever arise, to open the leadership to those who were not Christian. Perhaps we should have known this earlier, but we did not," he wrote.

The BCM, Davis said, has for many years ministered on the Vanderbilt campus in a non-discriminatory manner. "Anyone who walked through

the doors was welcomed," he pointed out, but also stressed in the e-mail that after "understanding the full extent of this new policy, we have no choice but to ask our local leadership to remove us from the status of recognized student organization. I have reached this decision after much prayer and wise counsel."

Davis noted that Bill Choate, collegiate ministries coordinator for the TBC, and Thom Thornton, BCM director at Vanderbilt, are supportive of the decision. "Bill and Thom have tried very hard to preserve relationships that have made effective ministry possible in the past and will continue to do so," Davis wrote, adding "there have been no winners in the hurt, confusion, division and pain that have been caused by this policy."

"The Vanderbilt BCM has been active on and good citizens of that campus for well over 80 years," Davis wrote. "Make no mistake about it. We are not leaving campus. We will continue to have a vibrant ministry there. Our mission has not changed."

Choate told the Baptist and Reflector newspaper, "We have and will continue to make an effort to have an impact for the Gospel at Vanderbilt University."

Davis gave no indication as to the status of the BCM building, located in the middle of the Vanderbilt campus. The building is owned by the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

BCM ministries are the equivalent of Baptist Student Unions on Mississippi campuses. No Mississippi colleges or universities have announced plans to institute any policies similar to Vanderbilt's.

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BQ DBMD FQVQGDQDB KQ, MZL

FQGQPNQDB ZAD KG EAF LJ, BMD B AZQ

DBMD VRLWQDB BPK; DBQ EAF LJ DBMD

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WQ BPK PZ DBQ IMJD LMO.

VABZ DEQINQ: YAFDO-QPWBD

Clue: V = J

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs One: Seven

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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He Offers Salvation: Believe • Luke 23:32-49

I have a very vivid memory as a child of Cabbage Patch dolls. Remember those? For younger teachers, the Cabbage Patch Kid was the original Tickle Me Elmo. It was the first time I recall that fights broke out because stores ran out long before kids stopped begging for one for Christmas. I personally felt that they clashed with my Barbie Dolls but that is a story for another time.

We were in Batesville and word came that a truckload of these dolls was about to arrive in the parking lot by the First Security Bank. I have two sisters. We were with my Aunt Daphne that has two daughters. Traffic laws became mere suggestions as we rushed to the scene. Every doll sold before it could get in the store. Mind you, this was long before cell phones were as common as keychains yet, the word got out. How? People were excited enough to search for pay phones and to drive to where others were to let them know about this incredible opportunity before it was too late and all the dolls were sold.

Read John 5:19-23. As far as we will go to see that our children are not disappointed, Jesus went farther. What motive was strong enough to drive Him to endure the cross? It was fear and expecta-

tion. Fear that everyone around Him was condemned by sin debt and the expectation that God would honor the sacrifice and judgement of the Son. Frankly, Jesus does not care if you are satisfied with your Christmas gifts or not, He submitted so that you would wake with a smile on your face on Judgement Day. The writer points to four things in Luke 23 that every person must be secure in to be prepared:

Believe: He Forgave (Luke 23:32-34) Why do we lack in the confidence of security in Christ? Some doubt because they still owe a sin debt. Others have accepted SOME forgiveness but not ALL forgiveness. It is hard to feel blessed and guilty at the same time. Our writer points out that Jesus was concerned for the forgiveness of His tormentors. How much more will He forgive those that approach Him with love and respect?



Explore the Bible
with Kelly Mitchell

Believe: He Obeyed (Luke 23:35-39) Jesus undoubtedly felt the same human urge any of us would feel if accused of being a fake or a phony. He could have proved Himself and called down angels to take Him off of the cross and then sat ring-side as the angels carried out judgement on the crowd. It would have been the ultimate, "I told you so." It was within His power but not within God's will.

Believe: He Saved (Luke 23:40-43) Once you have resolved for yourself that Jesus wants to forgive even those that do not know they need it and he proved it by voluntary torture, you arrive at the next logical step in this transformation. Why would He then deny one that voluntarily acknowledges Him? Not only will He not deny you, He cannot. The guarantee is written and must be honored, "If you confess with your

mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9 HCSB).

Believe: He Was Vindicated (Luke 23:44-49) You know how crowds work. When nothing happened to the first person to challenge Jesus to prove who He was, a second gave it a try and so on... Those that believed had to question if He was really able to save Himself? No one would voluntarily put themselves through such torment! Then, out go the lights...

You know that awkward moment when you are talking about someone and suddenly the person you are talking to looks over your shoulder and their eyes get really big? You can have that moment with Jesus now or on Judgement Day. Is there any person that you, as God, would enjoy sending to Hell? Your answer is the one you are not suited to share the gospel story with, that only leaves the rest of the planet.

For discussion: What would you do if God suddenly informed you that you are lost? Do you have the courage to admit before your church you are/were wrong? What would you say to someone that is afraid to admit they are lost?

Mitchell is pastor of Main Street Church, Goodman.

A Legacy of Faith • Genesis 22:1-3, 7-14; 26:2-5

If we have faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, we have something extremely valuable to pass on to the generations after us: our life's legacy. While we live on earth, we can demonstrate our faith by the way we live. Remember that everything we do is watched by those around us. People notice whether we mow our grass or are dressed to attend church on Sunday. Just by talking to us, our neighbor can tell whether we are sympathetic or frustrated and our smile tells them we have a priceless joy in our lives that many people don't possess. What are some ways your obedience and faithfulness to God can impact others?

Faith Tested Genesis 22:1-2, 7-10

The name Abraham means "father of a multitude" (Gen. 17:1-8) Abraham and his wife, Sarah, were anxious for God's promise to be fulfilled. Abraham was one hundred and Sarah was ninety years old. When God sent them a son, Abraham named him Isaac. When he was a young man, possibly 13-14 years old, God commanded Abraham to offer his only son as a burnt offering. God's motive was to prove the degree of Abraham's obedience. (All the People of the Bible) When God called, "Abraham!", he answered, "Here I am." God continued, "Take your only son

Isaac, whom you love, to the region of Moriah and use him as the burnt offering. I'll let you know exactly where." (vvi-2) The rocky top of the temple hill is enshrined as the Dome of the Rock; which stands there to this day.) Abraham never questioned God. He obeyed Him by preparing for the three day trip. This intense story causes me to wonder what happened on the journey. What did they talk about? Did the father share what the burnt offering would be? Isaac had a question for his father: "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham kindly said that God would provide the lamb. That's a good way to answer a hard question from your child. Just be honest but don't feel obligated to furnish all the details. A simple answer is enough. Isaac trusted his father and quietly obeyed him as he was bound and laid on top of the wood. The final obedient trust came as Abraham took the knife to slay his son.



Bible Studies for Life
with Betty Davis

Faith Proven Genesis 22:11-14

Matthew 17:20 (HCSB) "For I assure you: If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain 'move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." As Abraham stood poised above his son with the knife suspended in the air, the test was over, Abraham's faith and complete obedience proved these things: Abraham was so close to God that he trusted and obeyed Him even when he saw no help in sight. And, Isaac had learned much from his father about faith, obedience and trust. When we depend on God and not on ourselves, we learn of His willingness to provide. My husband, Charles, and I experienced that lesson as we saved our money for him to attend Mississippi College. We trusted the Lord, and He used the members in our first pastorate in Tinsley, Mississippi

to encourage and supply for the needs of our whole family. Abraham named the place of the altar experience with Isaac: Jehovahjireh, the Lord will provide.

Faith Multiplied Genesis 26:2-5

There was a famine in the land. The Lord appeared to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt, but rather live in the land He would tell him about. "Even though you will be a foreigner, I will be with you and bless you." (v.3) The Lord promised, as He had his father Abraham, that his offspring would be many and The Lord would give them much land. Isaac's generations would be a blessing to all the nations of the earth. All this because Abraham obeyed the Lord and kept his commands, statutes and instructions.

I hope you can sing this song as a prayer to God about your faithfulness to Him:

"May all who come behind us find us faithful, may the fire of our devotion light their way. May the footprints that we leave, lead them to believe, and the lives we live inspire them to obey. Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful." (Find Us Faithful p. 598, 2008 Baptist Hymnal).

Davis is a member of Fellowship Church, Meridian.

MS POSITIONS

ZION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, WESSON, MS IS SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER. Please send resumes to Zion Hill Baptist Church, Attention: Youth Minister Search Committee 8081 Martinsville, Rd., Wesson, MS 39191 or email brothertom@zionhillwesson.org.

FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH, 1046 FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE, MCCOMB, MS IS SEARCHING FOR A MINISTER OF MUSIC.

Send resumes to the above address marked Personnel Committee or phone 601-584-7003.

BI-VOCATIONAL CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED. Mail resume to: "Search Team", Toomsaba Baptist Church, P.O. Box 487, Toomsaba, MS 39364.

EAST BOONEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOONEVILLE, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR SENIOR PASTOR. Candidates must be theologically conservative, stand on the inerrancy

of scripture, and possess strong leadership and communication skills. Please send resume to: EBBC, 4 CR 7015, Booneville, MS 38829.

LEESBURG BAPTIST CHURCH, RANKIN COUNTY, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL WORSHIP LEADER. Please e-mail resumes to leesburgbaptistchurch@yahoo.com, if mailing: ATTN: Pastor Joseph Oster 796 Hwy 481 Morlon, MS 39117 www.leesburgbaptistchurch.com

PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS, IS SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER. Please send resumes to Youth Committee Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 2162 Old Hwy 84 West, Brookhaven, MS 39601 or e-mail resumes to PGBC@telepak.net Deadline for submitting resumes is June 1, 2012.

HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN NESHOBA ASSOCIATION IS SEEKING AN INDI-

VIDUAL FOR PART-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR. Please send resume to dmphilips@gmail.com or contact Michelle Phillips at 601-507-7700.

SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH IN SONTAG MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resumes to: Shiloh Baptist Church PO Box 166 Sontag MS 39665. Call 601-587-7653 for additional information and leave message.

Bible Drill



OAKHURST CHURCH, CLARKSDALE, recognizes its children and youth Bible drillers.



SLAYDEN CHURCH, SLAYDEN, recognizes its Bible Buddies: Jake Mackey, Keira Riley, Annsleigh Fair, Kaede Carpenter, Jenna Buse, Danny Mackey and Judy Roberts, leader.

STANDING PINE CHURCH, WALNUT GROVE, recognizes its Bible drillers: Abbie Scott, Hailey Jamison, Clancy Scott, Savannah Greer, and Ashley Smith.



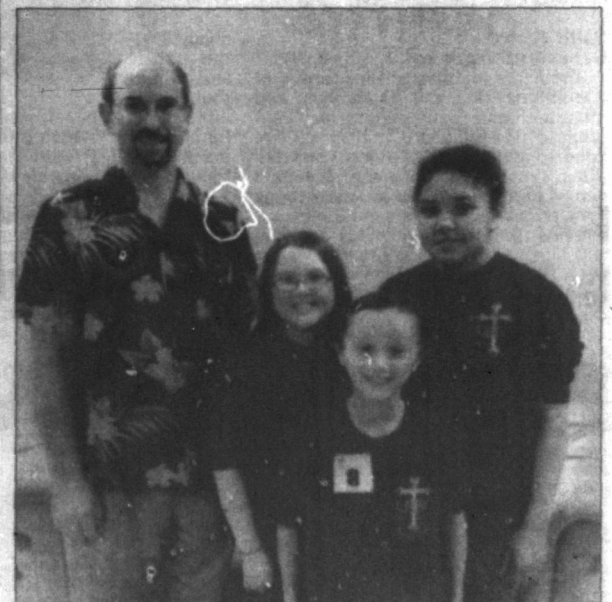
RAYMOND ROAD CHURCH, JACKSON, recognizes its Bible drillers: Brittney Beasley, Annemarie Russell, Ansley Myers, Abby Taggart, Courtney Evans, Madison Kirk, and Ashleigh Beasley. Dawn Taggart and Lisa Evans, leaders.



OAKHURST CHURCH, CLARKSDALE, recognizes its 9-year scholarship Bible drillers: Elisabeth Pollard, left, 3rd place; and Christiana Upchurch, right, 2nd place.



FIRST CHURCH, OKOLONA, recognizes its children's Bible drillers: front row, John Aver Herrod, Eli Young, Shelly Hester, and Anna Lowery Herrod; 2nd row, Cade Jones, Cally Perry, and Matt Henry; back row, Ainsley Young, Alibi Crane, Layla Owens, and Kati Moore.



LEMOYNE BOULEVARD CHURCH, BILOXI, recognizes its children's Bible drillers: Mark Guice, Kayla McNair, Selena Leger, and Sammy Patt.